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Series of First Volumes : Number Four

FRINGE

FRINGE

PEARL ANDELSON

CHICAGO-WILL RANSOM-MCMXXIII

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To My Father

and To Edna

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With that surprise

Of one who speaks
To us and knows
Wherein he lies.

— Yvor Winters

Autumn Rain

To eyes hollow
With the gray distress
The passing swallow
Is all but a caress.

Out of an Early Snow

I see the forehead of Moses
In the autumn sky,
The prophet who could look into this dream
And prophesy.

He will not say. Only rends
White wisps of hair
To go with the chipped tablet
Down the air.

To a Bird in a Cage

O little yellow bird,
You are my soul,
Repeating a note
For which there is no word.

Steeples.

They gaily pass
Within
Who would be freed (*en masse*)
Of sin.

Portrait of an Old Lady

Up flutters a hand to caress—
Midway in the prayer—
Her Sabbath dress,
The frail gray of her hair.

To a Dead Love

Why, O love,
Shall I cease to sing,
Who above her child
Would plant a flowering thing?

To Felix

Clear as water pooled in a cup
I hear your thoughts
Through all the spaciousness of my unrest.
You have no place
For the white bird at my breast,
Or the face your hands lift up.

April Snow

Oh, your words are bitter to me
As these last flakes of snow are
To the little shining buds; but no bud
That glistens like a raindrop on a tree
Is so fresh with love.

Solace

Tap
At my pane
With your finger-tip,
O rain.

Beach Song

What are they weaving under the water?
They make sheer laces and drag them down.
They ruffle a lawn with a great grieving.
What are they making—what manner of gown?

What are they weaving, caught here,
Caught there on the thin-washed blue?
Who is to be married or who is to be buried,
Under the water, under the water?

Out of a Cavalcade of Dust

In such a white procession,
In such a guise,
The dead might return
With pantomime of lips and eyes.

Eli! Eli!

"Eli! Eli!" What is that echo of a cry?
Tall and long-bearded and two by two
They go with eyes cast downward,
Walking before Egypt without sound.

But those who have been given prior place
For gray-beardedness talk to God mildly
With their mind's lips, expecting soon
To meet him face to face;
and one,
Who is somewhat a fool, has been charmed
By a glimpse of stars in a pool,
Two and two in sacrificial garb.

I Take My Answer of a Sage

O black-gowned philosopher that walks
on the water,
Precisely-cut as the evening star,
All mysteries are in your profound eyes
In one. Who tries to find you
Therefrom is drawn down.

Legerdemain

While the cricket vaunted
Our rain-brilliant eyes,
A subtle thicket caught at
Half-lies.

Chapter

I

How long ago since I brought you
into my heart
And you still stand,
Cold effigy of love,
Letting none pass.

II

Shadows
In a wind,
Two contend for place—
How shall I know my mind?

III

Like an unhappy ghost
I lingered
In the dark corners
Of his soul.

IV

Do not drop your head,
So upon your breast—
My eyes hold all it was best
I leave unsaid.

Madonna

My eyes are infinitely mild:
Your hand,
Lying against my breast,
Is like a child.

At Play

My fingers
Are merry children
In the meadow
Of your hair.

Tide Out

But the hour comes,
When you are snuffed out
Like a ghost
At dawn.

Expression

Inept as the words
That wait upon my mind
These twigs and half-formed buds,
Pecking the wind.

Spring Moon

One fair
Breast is bare.
Your eyes caress
This; mine the moon.

My lips a red
Flower; with a fine
Thread
Our souls are caught.

As ever your thought
Flees mine.

Two Sue for Favor

One is young.
Lonely his eyes.
The kiss of his lips
Salted with bitterness.

One is old and wise
With pale lips
And brittle
Finger-tips.

Worker in Marble

So I begin—
More bitter chiselled words.
Not one soft word
To ease my heart.

Difference

So he:
"Love is
A lady, white as stone,
Who stands alone
Or passes by."

And I:
"If one
May not be
Like a pebble spun
Into the sea,

Take this and
This lightly: hand,
Hair — where
Love
May not live."

Half-nun

Oh, believe me, I would rejoice,
If you could tell yourself:
"As well
Caress snow."

Thin Refuge

Are you more than
Man?

Go! I can
Say, *Go!* or I can

Take the veil of
Thought, fog-wall you
Cannot cleave through.

To an Erstwhile Loved One

Shall I, my friend,
Who knew satiety
In love and company,
Cry at this welcome end?

When I would breathe deep
Breaths, because my
Soul at last is mine,
Shall I weep?

In All

No bitterness remain,
If in all,
I have loved a passing shadow
Cast on a wall.

Word

How soon
I, too,
Have been left lonely,
O pale moon.

Out of a Weariness

O Love,
Be Rest; be Calm.
(For I am wise!)
Come like Death
With quiet palm and eyes.

A Trivial Day in Early Autumn

A China lily cup
Upon a pool
Lifts up
Its bowl.

Over the pale sky
Frail clouds;
A butterfly
About the garden flowers.

From a Sea-girl

I

Star-light and moon-light
Slip into the doorways of the sea
All night.

II

My hair is the sun-color
Of the sand; but in an inland pool
My eyes were cool
As thin sea-air.

Late Winter Wood

One cannot know
What words they whisper who go,

Unbeheld among the rooted deer
That herd here,

And without footsteps pass
Across the hard grass.

Circle-chase

"See, thus the winds
Before me." Swiftly she
Comes, veil of pale hair
To pale knee.

He, swiftly, bright thigh
Among meadow-flowers, among tall grass.
Following the winds,
They pass.

Panel

Slim birches make
A wall along the way
The women take, they

With remote air
Of eye and hand and
Coiled hair. Long-throated, they

That reach
Out down the birch-walk
In thought
Too still for speech.

Sehnsucht

In hooded procession
Night enters here,

Recession
Of light, not of love,

Not of the need of rest,
Transcending lip and breast,

Goad
That in Them created God.

The Philosopher

For hermitage: a grain
Of rice.
"Where assemble one's selves again
In all thy rooms?"

Sits in the sun, assumes
No airs.
"If ye be too precise
For bare shins, look not."

Sits in the sun.
"One
The beginning, and One
The end. Both the One?"

Willows bend in the wind.
So pliant to the next thought.
"God is good. One may see far,
Demanding nought."

Woman in a Garden

Grey tulips; yellow tulips
Walk in wide
Companies beside
The woman in her garden.

She who walks thus apart,
Whose garden
Enters her heart,
Whose steps go—

Her eyes are dumb.
They know:
What miracle
Can come?

A Miraculous Day in May

Before this,
One must have face,
Indeed, to offer a flower
In a vase.

Philosophic Dialogue

1st Figure: Mountains are simple—
In the thumb-nail mind
Of man illusion doubles to
Illusion in semblance of
Complexity to hide
Confusion.

2nd Figure: None but knows
Within Six Days
He made the World
And on the Seventh
Sought Repose.

The Evil, dying,
Descend to Hell;
The Good come
Into the Kingdom.

1st Figure: Infinite Logic
Is too fine a
Web for the myopic eye of a
Fly.

2nd Figure: None but knows
Within Six Days—

1st Figure: Cause follows cause without
End. The hounds tear
In a circle after a
No-hare.

2nd Figure: The Good come
Into the Kingdom.

1st Figure: For this is truth: the tail is
Coiled back relevantly to the
Teeth.

2nd Figure: There is but
This single beauty:
In fear of God each
Does his duty.

1st Figure: Out of the logic of
Compensation in a circle
Autonomic, beauty to
Spare, a girl's
Breasts; her hair.

2nd Figure: . . fear . . . . .
. . . . duty.

Sixteenth Century Ghetto Pieces

I

The Sign

Who wears
The yellow cloth wheel,
Mark of Jew, fares
Not well

Unless his heel
Be swift. So through the night
The flight
Of thy bright Wheel.

II

The Government Orders the Brothels
Removed to Judenstrasse

One has seen
The meadows green
As a green gem only in sight
Of eyes closing out the night.

Holy
As God's word
Bird-
Notes heard

There. Now the Will,
hungry like *their* eyelids,
Bids
These abide
At one's side.

III

Sundown

Though the sun has not been
In this street where
Roofs bruise like the sin
Of those who go

To them, we know
It has been, for one
Comes with his hollow key
To lock the Jew in.

Seaside

Steam refrain to rain
of gravel. Long division
in the mind
running about with hods
carried over. Impossible to find
an answer true if found.

Excursion

I went from there,
that place where
I walked long gray streets
as one speaks of food, dress,
down other streets with less elation
than turning in the conversation
to other casual conversation.

Gay cottages bloom on hill-sides
of sand near Tamarack.
Below on the octoroon beach,
clustering like grapes, the bathers:
purple, orange, and maroon.

In the sand woods inland a spotted
antelope stands,
and waits,
and fluctuates
among his spots.

The vertical waters flowing
horizontally with sky
and hills and into this my
going.

Sun
and moon one.

Mishap

The rain arranged
crystal berries for me
to wear
in my hair.

By inadvertence one fell
into the
infinity
of a bluebell.

Autumn Trees

Like old men
and women:
simplified
to a gesture.

Connexion

A phasma hare
scampers in the chambers where,
feigning not to see,
I comb my hair becomingly.

Autumn Evenings

Cleaving autumn from evening
white north-south walk,
imaginary line where we walk.

On a park bench I
quench I in gray air,
while memories
of autumn trees
cry:
"Bring spring!"

Or savagely on the one sky
die.
But the moon is an eternal
pearl.

Or lake and sky a one
and I go
a curtain before the moon
on.

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